

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

IN RE:

**USE OF MASKS OR FACE
COVERINGS IN PUBLIC AREAS OF
THE JAMES A. BYRNE U.S.
COURTHOUSE**

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**SECOND AMENDED
STANDING ORDER**

This Standing Order amends the August 2, 2021 Amended Standing Order regarding the use of masks or face coverings in common or public areas of the James A. Byrne U.S. Courthouse in Philadelphia.

On February 25, 2022, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced a new system of “COVID-19 Community Levels” to help communities decide what prevention steps to take based on the latest data. Under the new guidance, the recommended prevention measures depend on whether the applicable Community Level is low, medium, or high. The CDC now recommends that masks be worn by all, regardless of vaccination status, in indoor public settings only in areas where the Community Level is high. Universal masking is not recommended in areas where the Community Level is low or medium. However, those who are immunocompromised or at high risk of severe disease from COVID-19 are advised to talk to their healthcare providers about whether they need to wear a mask in areas where the Community Level is medium. The CDC also recommends that those with household or social contact with someone at high risk for severe disease consider wearing a mask when indoors with such persons in areas where the Community Level is medium. At all Community Levels, people may choose to wear a mask based on personal preference, informed by personal level of risk. The CDC currently

classifies all counties in this district at the low Community Level. The current Community Levels reflect the improving COVID-19 metrics in this district in recent weeks.

On February 16, 2022, the Philadelphia Department of Public Health announced its own new system of “COVID Response Levels,” which tie the City’s COVID-19 mandates to specific pandemic metrics. On March 2, 2022, the Department of Public Health announced that the City would move from the “Mask Precautions” Response Level to the “All Clear” Response Level. At the All Clear Response Level, masks are not required in most public settings, though the Department of Public Health recommends that people at higher risk of being exposed or at higher risk of severe COVID consider still masking.

Upon consideration of the updated public health guidance outlined above, including the current COVID-19 Community Levels for the counties in this district and the current COVID Response Level for the City of Philadelphia, and with the unanimous agreement of the Facility Security Committee of the Byrne Courthouse, it is ORDERED that, effective March 9, 2022, the August 2, 2021 Amended Standing Order regarding the use of masks or face coverings in common or public areas of the Byrne Courthouse is AMENDED as follows:

1. Effective March 9, 2022, the wearing of masks or face coverings will no longer be required when entering the Courthouse or when in common or public areas of the building.

2. Although masks are not required, all persons are permitted and encouraged to wear a mask or face covering that covers the wearer’s nose and mouth in the Courthouse if they wish to do so. There are many reasons why a person might need or want to wear a face mask at this time, and all are asked to respect the health decisions of others in this regard. Visitors who wish to mask are expected to supply their own mask or face covering; however, the Court will continue to make masks available for visitors at Courthouse entrances.

3. Judges retain the discretion to require masks in the courtroom, as they see fit.
4. Building tenants retain the discretion to require masks in their own space, as they see fit.
5. This Standing Order shall remain in effect until amended or vacated. The Facility Security Committee will continue to closely monitor conditions with regard to COVID-19 in this district, including the COVID-19 Community Levels for the counties in this district and the COVID Response Level for the City of Philadelphia, and will amend this Order as circumstances require.
6. This Standing Order shall be enforceable by the United States Marshals Service and the Court Security Officers.

/s/ Juan R. Sánchez
Juan R. Sánchez
Chief Judge

Date: March 7, 2022